

Message Text

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PAGE 01 MOSCOW 10946 051430Z

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SUBJECT: INFORMAL SOVIET PROPOSAL FOR JOINT US-SOVIET CONFERENCE
OF WRITERS, CRITICS AND PUBLISHERS

STATE FOR CU/EE, EUR/SOV; USIA FOR IEU; LENINGRAD FOR P&C

1. DURING SMALL LUNCHEON GIVEN FOR DEPARTING ACAO SUTTER AT THE UNION OF WRITERS CLUB BY A. CHUGUNOV, ASSISTANT EDITOR OF THE JOURNAL OF FOREIGN LITERATURE AND T. KUDRYAVTSEVA, THE JOURNAL'S EDITOR FOR WEST EUROPEAN AND AMERICAN LITERATURE. MRS. KUDRYAVTSEVA MADE AN INFORMAL PROPOSAL FOR A NEW KIND OF LITERARY EXCHANGE. SHE PROPOSED A KIND OF DARTMOUTH CONFERENCE OF US AND SOVIET WRITERS, CRITICS AND PUBLISHERS. A MAJOR PURPOSE OF THE CONFERENCE WOULD BE TO ACQUAINT EACH OTHER MORE FULLY WITH GOOD CONTEMPORARY WRITERS. AND WITH LITERARY AND PUBLISHING TRENDS. MRS. KUDRYAVTSEVA FRANKLY STATED THAT FROM SOVIET POINT OF VIEW MAJOR INTEREST IN CONFERENCE IS TO INCREASE THE AMOUNT OF CONTEMPORARY SOVIET LITERATURE PUBLISHED IN THE US. HOWEVER, SHE SAID THAT THERE WOULD BE A SIMILAR BENEFIT TO THE US BE RAISING THE NUMBER OF AMERICAN WORKERS OF LITERATURE APPEARING IN THE SOVIET UNION. THE IDEA HAS BEEN DISCUSSED INFORMALLY WITH N. FEDORENKO, SECRETARY OF THE UNION OF WRITERS, WHO SUPPORTS IT AND FEELS THAT FUNDS COULD BE FOUND IN THE

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PAGE 02 MOSCOW 10946 051430Z

SOVIET GOVERNMENT TO SUPPORT SUCH A CONFERENCE.

MRS. KUDRYAVTSEVA ADDED THAT FEDORENKO AND PERHAPS NORMAN COUSINS OF THE SATURDAY REVIEW WITH TWHOM SHE IS PERSONALLY ACQUAINTED COULD FORM THE NUCLEUS OF EACH COUNTRY'S RESPECTIVE DELEGATIONS.

2. EMBASSY BELIEVES THE SUGGESTION HAS MERIT. ALTHOUGH FAR MORE AMERICAN LITERATURE IS TRANSLATED INTO RUSSIAN AND PUBLISHED IN THE SOVIET UNION THAN THE OTHER WAY AROUND, THE TOTAL AMOUNT IS NONETHELESS SMALL. FURTHERMORE, SOVIET PUBLISHERS TEND TO STAY WITH WELL-KNOWN WRITERS, OR EVEN WITH THOSE WHO HAVE LONG SINCE BECOME CLASSICS, AND DO LITTLE TO INTRODUCE THEIR READERS TO NEW SIGNIFICANT AMERICAN WRITERS. FOR THIS REASON ALONE SUCH A CONFERENCE IF IT DID EXCITE GREATER INTEREST ON THE PART OF SOVIET PUBLISHERS IN WHAT IS NEW AND VITAL IN AMERICAN LITERATURE WOULD BE IN OUR INTEREST.

3. EMBASSY WOULD APPRECIATE DEPARTMENT'S VIEWS ON THIS INFORMAL PROPOSAL. EMBASSY BELIEVES THAT IF WE GIVE ENCOURAGING INFORMAL RESPONSE SOVIETS WOULD THEN TAKE NEXT STEP AND MAKE FORMAL PROPOSAL.
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